

MARVEL

#4

**COSTA
SANDOVAL
ALMARA**

VENOM



YEARS AGO, PETER PARKER (A.K.A. THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN) ACCIDENTALLY BONDED WITH AN ALIEN BEING CALLED A SYMBIOTE. WHEN PETER REALIZED THE COSTUME WAS ACTUALLY AN AGGRESSIVE LIVING ORGANISM, HE REJECTED IT. BUT DURING THEIR TIME TOGETHER, THE SYMBIOTE HAD ACCESS TO SPIDER-MAN'S GENETIC CODE, AND NOW GRANTS WHOMEVER IT BONDS WITH SKILLS SIMILAR TO HIS: WALL-CRAWLING, THE POWER TO GENERATE BIOORGANIC WEBBING, AND UNIQUE ABILITIES TO SHAPE-SHIFT AND BECOME INVISIBLE, TURNING THEM INTO...

VENOM



FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MONTHS, THE VENOM SYMBIOTE HAS RETURNED TO EARTH, BUT WAS SEPARATED FROM ITS HOST, FLASH THOMPSON, IN THE PROCESS.

WEAKENED BY THIS SEPARATION AND DESPERATE FOR A NEW HOST, THE SYMBIOTE BONDED WITH LEE PRICE, A FORMER ARMY RANGER. THANKS TO HIS MILITARY TRAINING, LEE HAS BEEN ABLE TO IMPOSE HIS WILL UPON THE CREATURE. HE HOPED TO SECRETLY USE THE SYMBIOTE TO HIS ADVANTAGE TO GAIN THE FAVOR OF THE BLACK CAT AS SHE WORKS TO BECOME NEW YORK'S KINGPIN OF CRIME.

WHILE BLACK CAT MAY NOT KNOW THAT LEE IS IN POSSESSION OF THE VENOM SYMBIOTE, TWO FBI AGENTS ARE FULLY AWARE OF HIS SITUATION, AND ARE LOOKING FOR WAYS TO CAPITALIZE ON IT...

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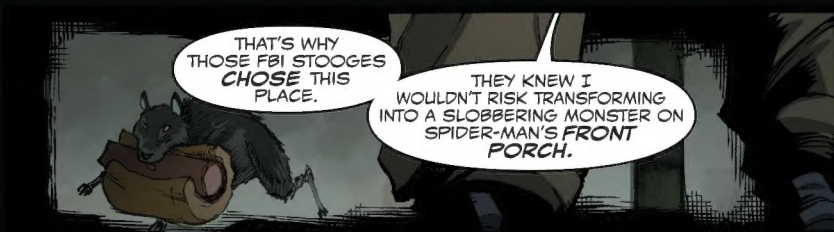
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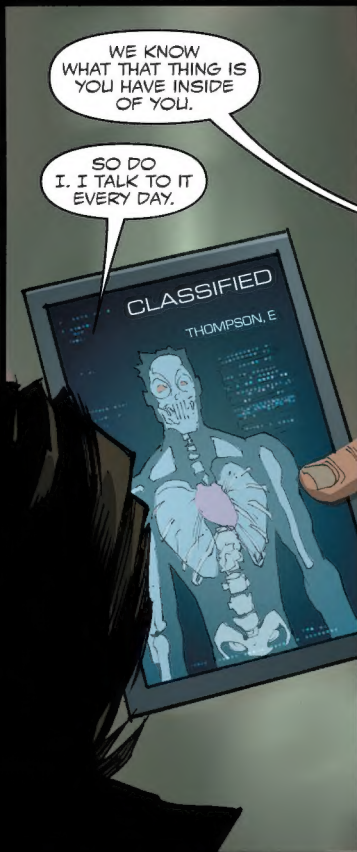
**SPECIAL THANKS
VICTOR NAVA**

"DON'T LIKE THIS
PLACE, LEE."



"WAS CAPTURED
HERE BEFORE.
HELD PRISONER."



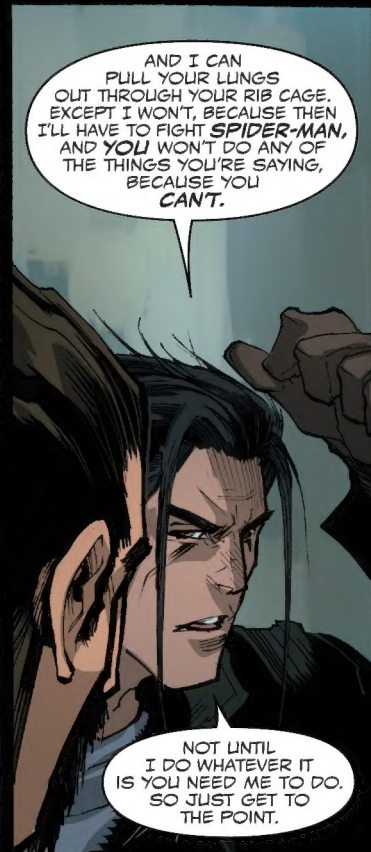


WE KNOW
WHAT THAT THING IS
YOU HAVE INSIDE
OF YOU.

SO DO
I. I TALK TO IT
EVERY DAY.



YOU'RE NOT
HEARING ME. THAT
THING SPENT A LOT
OF TIME IN GOVERNMENT
CAPTIVITY. WE'RE **STUDIED**
IT. WE KNOW ITS
WEAKNESSES--



AND I CAN
PULL YOUR LUNGS
OUT THROUGH YOUR RIB CAGE.
EXCEPT I WON'T, BECAUSE THEN
I'LL HAVE TO FIGHT **SPIDER-MAN**,
AND **YOU** WON'T DO ANY OF
THE THINGS YOU'RE SAYING,
BECAUSE YOU
CAN'T.

NOT UNTIL
I DO WHATEVER IT
IS YOU NEED ME TO DO.
SO JUST GET TO
THE POINT.



HERE'S THE
POINT. WE'VE
RESEARCHED THAT
THING YOU'RE WEARING.
WE KNOW IT HAS A
BIO-ORGANIC
MEMORY.

WE WANT
YOU TO TELL US
WHO SPIDER-MAN
IS.



YOU
CAN'T BE
SERIOUS.



HOW THE HELL WOULD I EVEN **KNOW** WHO SPIDER-MAN IS?

IT'S LIKE I SAID. THAT THING HAS A **MEMORY**. IT CAN **THINK**. IT WAS BONDED WITH SPIDER-MAN, SO IT KNOWS WHO SPIDER-MAN IS.

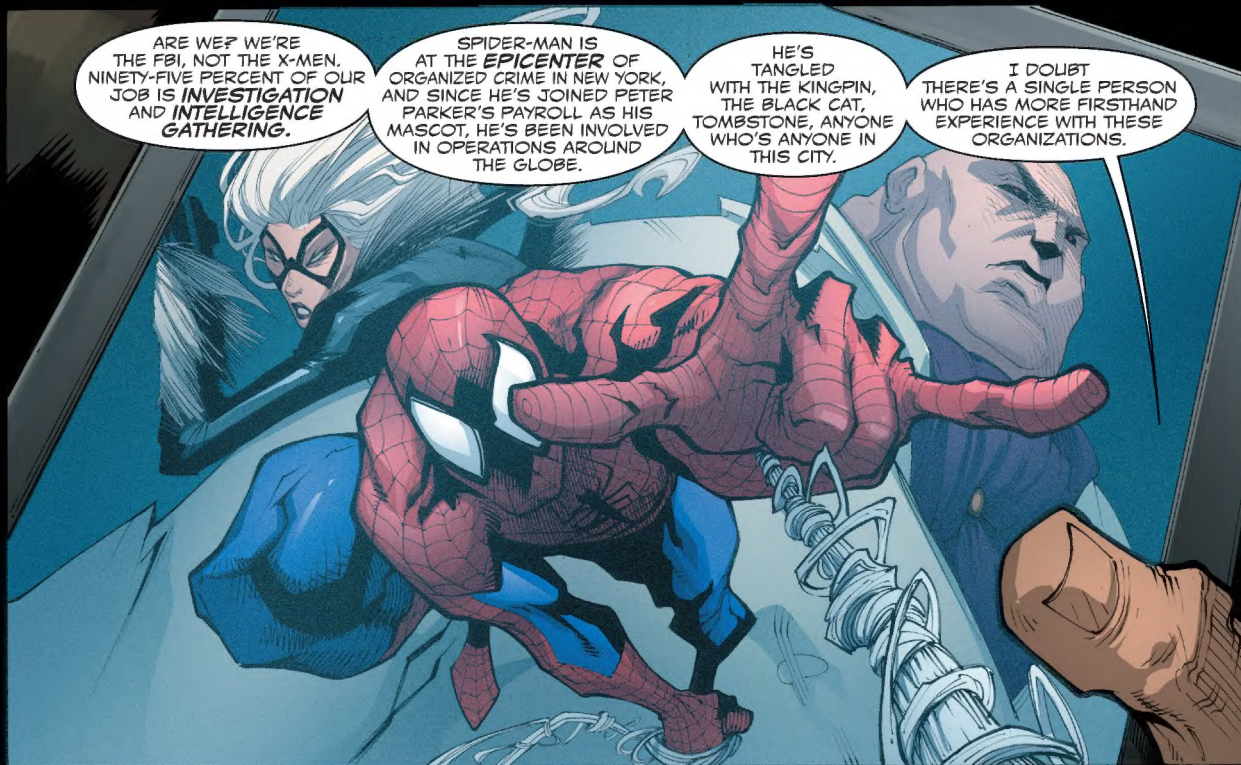


DO YOU KNOW?

I DON'T THINK SO, LEE.



WHY SPIDER-MAN? AREN'T YOU GUYS ON THE SAME TEAM?

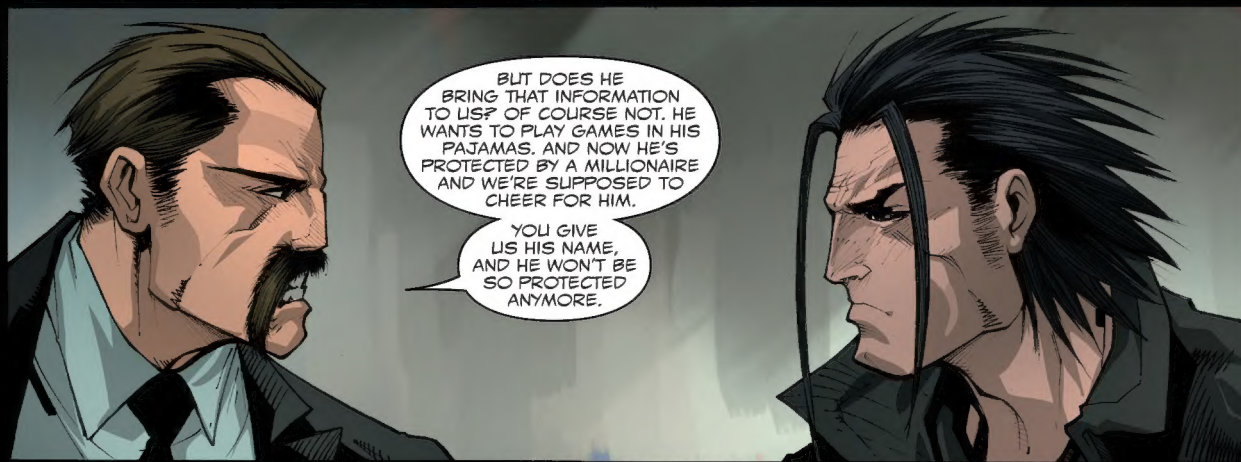


ARE WE? WE'RE THE FBI, NOT THE X-MEN. NINETY-FIVE PERCENT OF OUR JOB IS **INVESTIGATION** AND **INTELLIGENCE GATHERING**.

SPIDER-MAN IS AT THE **EPICENTER** OF ORGANIZED CRIME IN NEW YORK, AND SINCE HE'S JOINED PETER PARKER'S PAYROLL AS HIS MASCOT, HE'S BEEN INVOLVED IN OPERATIONS AROUND THE GLOBE.

HE'S TANGLED WITH THE KINGPIN, THE BLACK CAT, TOMBSTONE, ANYONE WHO'S ANYONE IN THIS CITY.

I DOUBT THERE'S A SINGLE PERSON WHO HAS MORE FIRSTHAND EXPERIENCE WITH THESE ORGANIZATIONS.



BUT DOES HE BRING THAT INFORMATION TO US? OF COURSE NOT. HE WANTS TO PLAY GAMES IN HIS PAJAMAS. AND NOW HE'S PROTECTED BY A MILLIONAIRE AND WE'RE SUPPOSED TO CHEER FOR HIM.

YOU GIVE US HIS NAME, AND HE WON'T BE SO PROTECTED ANYMORE.



THINK ABOUT IT. THE BUREAU WILL BE IN TOUCH, LEE.



NOT TELLING THEM WHAT THEY WANT TO KNOW?

WE COULDN'T EVEN IF WE WANTED TO.

MY BRAINS... NOT AS GOOD AS THEY WERE...

WELL, WHATEVER. I DON'T GIVE A CRAP ABOUT SPIDER-MAN.



THIS IS A BIG ASK, BUT IT'S NOT THEIR **REAL** ASK. IT'S A HAIL MARY. I GIVE THEM THE NAME OF SOMEONE MORE HIGH-PROFILE THAN ME, THEN THEY CAN MOVE ON AND NOT DEAL WITH ME ANYMORE.

GOOD! THEY CAN **HURT** US! LET THEM MOVE!

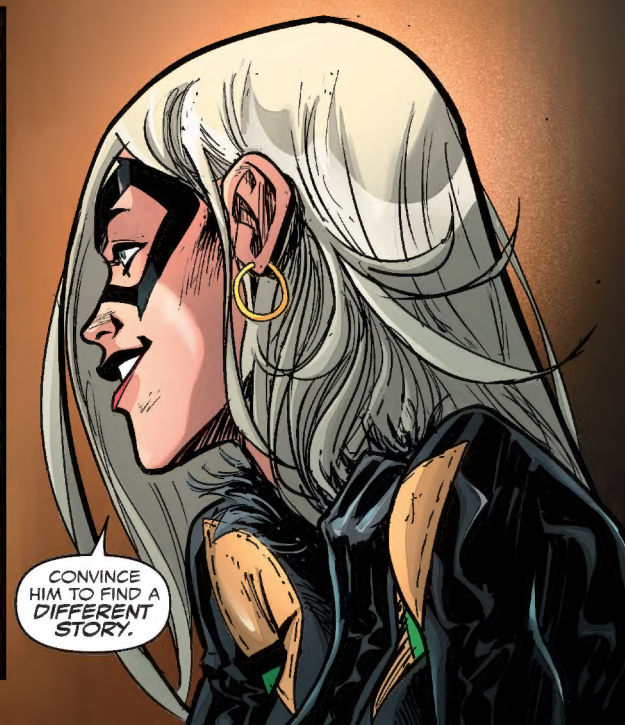
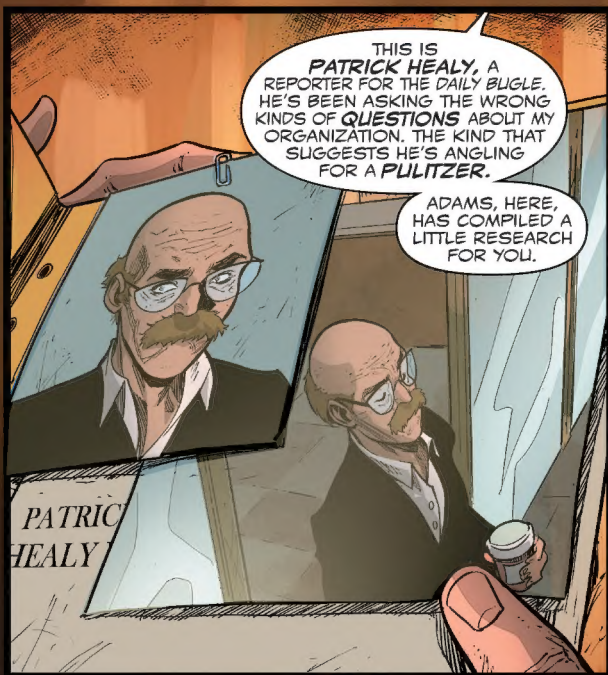


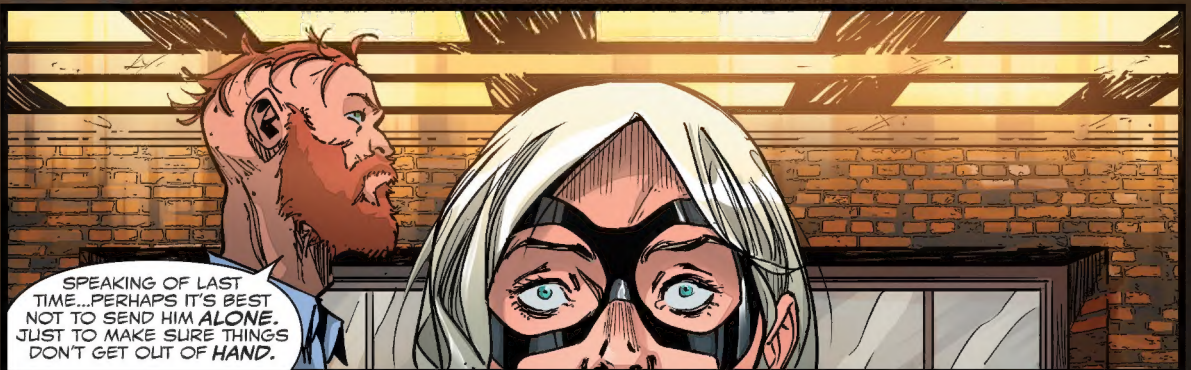
THEY'RE **SCARED** OF US. THEY KNOW WE'RE DANGEROUS, AND THE SECOND THEY DON'T NEED US, THEY'LL **BURN** US. WE HAVE TO PLAY THIS OUT. LET THEM DEMAND MORE FROM US. GET THEM USED TO **ASKING**.

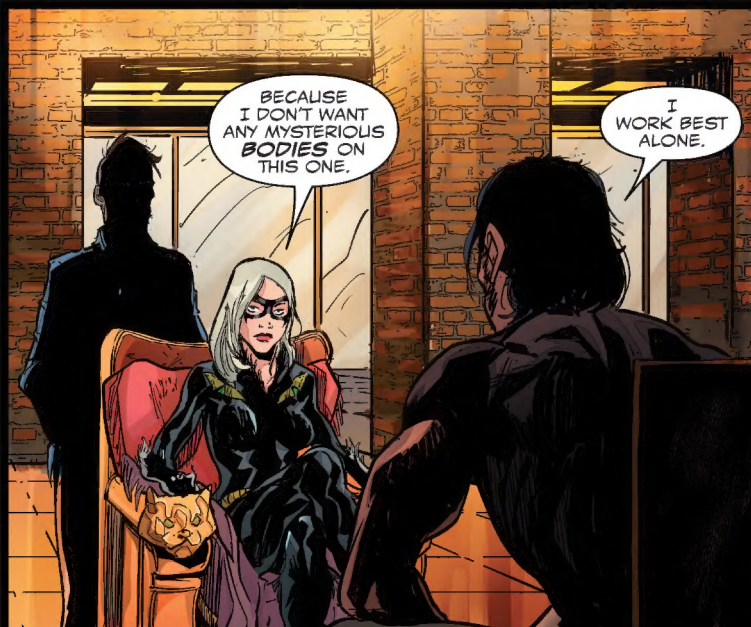
THE MORE WE DO, THE MORE THEY ASK, THE MORE WE ARE **SLAVES!**

NO. WHEN THEY **RELY** ON US...

...THEN THEY **BELONG** TO US.





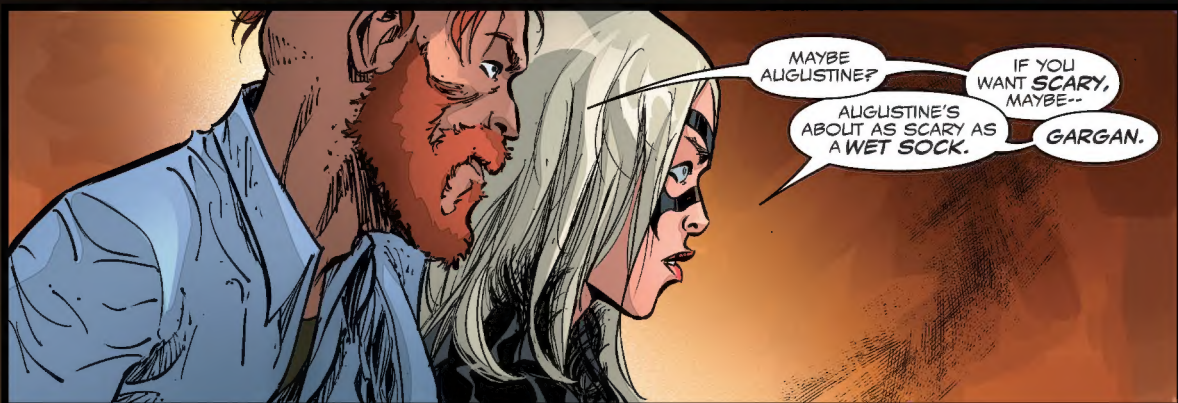


BECAUSE
I DON'T WANT
ANY MYSTERIOUS
BODIES
ON THIS ONE.

I
WORK BEST
ALONE.



THMP



MAYBE
AUGUSTINE?

IF YOU
WANT **SCARY**,
MAYBE--

AUGUSTINE'S
ABOUT AS SCARY AS
A WET SOCK.

GARGAN.



DON'T LIKE
MAC GARGAN,
LEE!

WHAT'S
HAPPENING?

IT'S **OBVIOUS**
WHAT'S
HAPPENING.



WE'RE BEING **OUT-
MANEUVERED.**



THIS IS BAD, LEE!

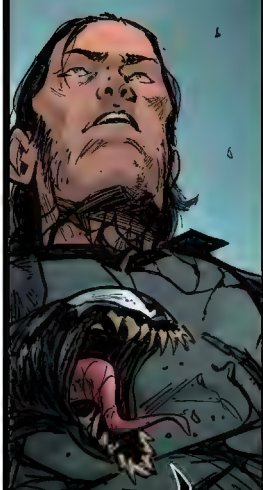
WE'RE SCARED! NO FRIENDS!

HAD FRIENDS ONCE. FRIENDS ARE GOOD!

WE'RE NOT **SCARED** AND WE DON'T NEED FRIENDS.

THAT GUY ADAMS DOESN'T TRUST US.

AND IF **HE** DOESN'T TRUST US, AND **GARGAN** CLEARLY DOESN'T TRUST US, I DON'T LIKE OUR ODDS IN THE CAT'S EYES.



AND IF **SHE** DOESN'T TRUST US?

LET'S JUST HOPE SHE DOES.

OTHERWISE, EVERY JOB WE DO FOR HER COULD BE AN AMBUSH.

THAT ADAMS ##&@ THINKS I'M HIDING SOMETHING, BUT HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT IT IS. AS LONG AS NOBODY IN CAT'S ORGANIZATION KNOWS ABOUT YOU, I STILL HOLD THE MOST CARDS.



HE STUCK GARGAN ON US TO **WATCH** US. SO WE JUST MAKE SURE GARGAN DOESN'T **SEE** ANYTHING.

GARGAN IS **BAD, LEE**. GARGAN IS **SCORPION**.

GARGAN'S AN **IDOT**. HE'S NOTHING TO--





--WORRY
ABOUT.

WE'RE
SUPPOSED TO
BE SCARY.

DIDN'T
YOU GET THE
MEMO?

AND HERE I THOUGHT
CALLING HIM A SCORPION
WAS A METAPHOR.

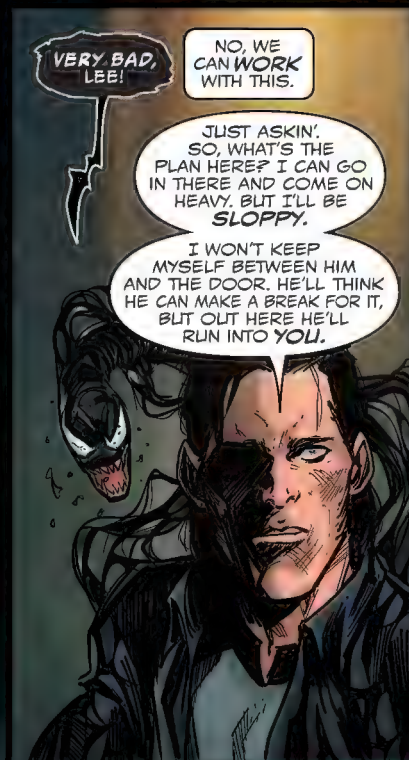
YOU LOOK
RIDICULOUS WITH
THAT HUGE SUIT IN THIS
DINKY HALLWAY.

DID YOU
ACTUALLY CLIMB
THE **STAIRS** IN
THAT THING?



I CLIMBED
THE WALL. CAME
DOWN FROM THE
ROOF.

WHAT DO
YOU CARE
HOW I GOT
IN HERE?



**VERY BAD,
LEE!**

NO, WE
CAN WORK
WITH THIS.

JUST ASKIN'.
SO, WHAT'S THE
PLAN HERE? I CAN GO
IN THERE AND COME ON
HEAVY. BUT I'LL BE
SLOPPY.

I WON'T KEEP
MYSELF BETWEEN HIM
AND THE DOOR. HE'LL THINK
HE CAN MAKE A BREAK FOR IT,
BUT OUT HERE HE'LL
RUN INTO **YOU.**



IT'S THE
PSYCHOLOGY OF
IT. HE'S THREATENED,
AND THERE'S
NOWHERE
TO RUN--

IS THIS
THAT **RANGER**
TRAINING I HEARD
ABOUT? YOU
THINK TOO
MUCH.



ANYWAY,
THERE AIN'T
GONNA **BE**
A DOOR.



HOLY
\$%&@#!


MR. HEALY, I
UNDERSTAND YOU'VE
BEEN TRYING TO WRITE A
PIECE ABOUT THE BLACK CAT'S
CONNECTION TO SUPER
CRIMINALS.

FIGURED
MAYBE YOU'D LIKE
A FACE-TO-FACE
INTERVIEW!

YAAAAA!

LEE!
HE'S KILLING HIM,
LEE! HAVE TO SAVE
THE MAN!

CAT TOLD US NOT TO
KILL THIS GUY. I DON'T
THINK GARGAN WOULD
DISOBEY HER.




NOT TO INTERRUPT,
BUT OUR BOSS ISN'T
INTERESTED IN ANY
MORE BODIES. IF YOUR
PLAN IS TO MAKE
ME LOOK BAD
WITH THIS--



THE PLAN
AIN'T TO MAKE YOU
LOOK BAD.

THE PLAN
IS TO KILL
YOU AND PIN IT
ON THIS IDIOT
AFTER I KILL
HIM.

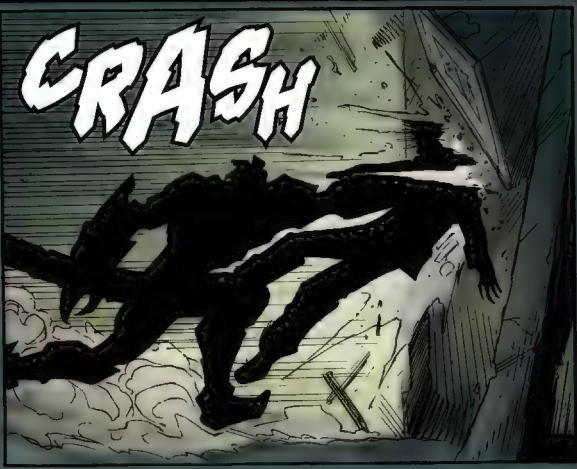


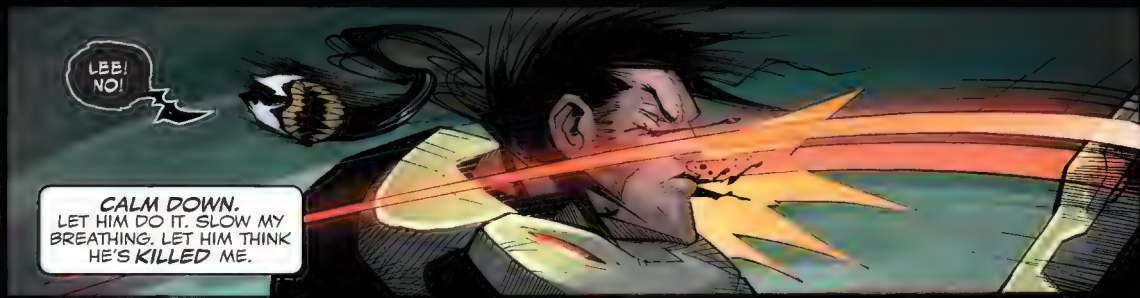
WHAT ARE
YOU--





WHAT'S THE CAT GONNA THINK? THAT A BUGLE REPORTER WAS KEEPING A TWELVE-MILLION-DOLLAR SCORPION TAIL UNDER HIS BED?





CALM DOWN.
LET HIM DO IT. SLOW MY
BREATHING. LET HIM THINK
HE'S KILLED ME.



NO! PROTECT MY **BRAIN**.
PROTECT MY **HEART**.
WHEN HE THINKS I'M
DEAD, HE'LL LEAVE.

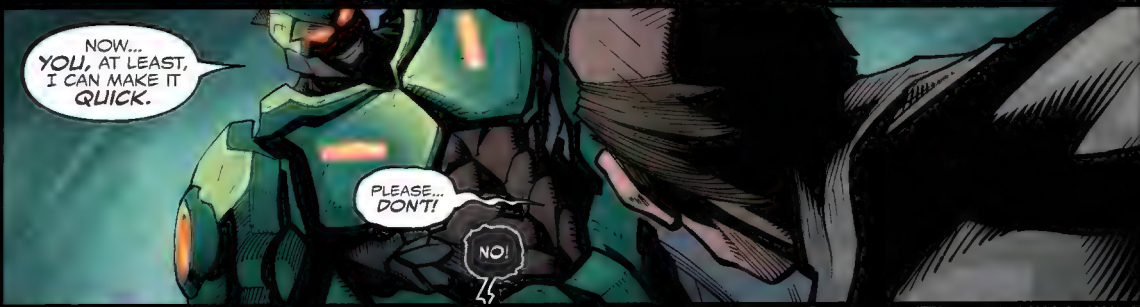
AND WE'LL
THINK...



...WE'LL THINK
OF SOME--



MAN,
THAT FELT
GOOD.



NOW...
YOU, AT LEAST,
I CAN MAKE IT
QUICK.

PLEASE...
DON'T!

NO!



WHAT?

NOOOO
MOOOORE
KILLINNGGG!





WHA--
YOU?!

I KNEW
IT!

I KNEW
YOU WERE HIDING
SOMETHING!

YESSSSS.

AND
NOW YOU'LL
DIE.



BWOOM

NYYYARGH!

I DON'T
KNOW WHERE
YOU GOT THAT THING,
LEE, BUT I HAD
IT FIRST.

I
KNOW EXACTLY
HOW TO TICKLE
IT.



TO BE CONTINUED...

SYMBIOWROTE

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DEVIN LEWIS
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OH MAN! Venom and Scorpion embroiled in a battle royale broadcast live for the whole world to see? I'm SURE that'll end well for both of them.

Hello, Symbiotes!

Ven-itor Devin Lewis reporting to you live and in-print from the heart of Marvel HQ in Manhattan, and HOO BOY! Is it an exciting week here in the Spider-Man office. Not only are we sending the final issue of DEAD NO MORE: THE CLONE CONSPIRACY to the printer, we also released the cover to VENOM #6 today, featuring a host who ISN'T LEE PRICE?!

What the heck is going on THERE? By the time this issue reaches your hands, I'm sure you'll have more information...

But enough about all the hubbub up here in the Mighty Marvel offices!

All you Venom fans out there have been writing and writing about the continuing adventures of the best slobbering symbiote in the whole Marvel U, so let's get to your letters!

Hey there, Venom crew! I've just finished reading the first two issues, and I gotta say, I'm intrigued.

One of the things I've been fond of is the characterization of the Venom symbiote itself. When Eddie and Mac had the suits the symbiote didn't really have much of a personality, but ever since the Flash Thompson run, it's growing as a character with its own wants, needs, likes and dislikes.

It's going to be a bit rough to get used to Lee as our favorite sharp-toothed, black-and-white antihero, but I'm willing to stick around to see what Mike types up next.

Keep it up, guys!

Ben N.

Hey, Ben! Thanks so much for your letter and I'm glad you're enjoying the series! Growing the symbiote's voice was a big goal of Mike's when he came aboard for this series. After all, the Venom symbiote is a living creature, and, like us, it responds to stimuli and external forces. When we were first discussing the series, Mike pointed out that, for a time, CONSCIOUSNESS was one of those very forces, and exploring what that means, to both the symbiote and the person to whom it's bonded, was a gamble. Couldn't be more glad to hear that it's paying off in your eyes! Hope we can keep it up!

Dear SymbiWrote,

Just got finished reading issue #2 of VENOM. This is the first time I've truly enjoyed the character since the Eddie Brock days! Lee Price is a very intriguing character. The premise of him being able to control the symbiote and using it to do jobs for the Black Cat is enthralling. It feels fresh but also well-grounded in the Venom/Spidey mythos.

The art is also fantastic. It's so stylish but without getting in its own way; I can still clearly tell what's happening in all the panels. The aesthetic works great with this new Venom design, too. It's a refreshing mix between the classic look and some new

touches that make Lee's version unique and distinct. Again, that new/old balance feels spot on.

Lastly, I'm really happy to read a super hero (well, villain) comic book that focuses on thrilling adventures, captivating characters, and intriguing stories. Lately I've been turned off by how partisan, divisive, and preachy so many hero books have gotten. I'm a life-long liberal, so I mostly agree with the messages, but personally I believe moral guidance too great a responsibility for anything other than family, friends, and first-hand life experiences...plus, my social network already has enough to argue about. ;-) So, please keep up this good writing that everyone can enjoy!

Now, this is the second time in my life I've written in to the letters section of a comic book. The first time was in 1991 when I was 10 years old. I wrote to THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN to tell them how much I loved issues #346 and #347 starring, you guessed it, Venom! They didn't print my letter, but I'll never forget the nonsensical and lame sign-off I came up with. It was a thing back then where people would say, "until [something outlandish], make mine Marvel!" So, I'd like to end this letter the same ridiculous way I ended that one.

But before I do, may I remind you that I was 10 and that ASM #347 ends with Venom happily retiring on a tropical island that may have been Hawaii. *shrug* Regardless, best of luck going forward! I hope this chapter of Venom runs for a long, long time! *ahem* And until Venom opens a Hawaiian restaurant downtown, make mine Marvel!

Joseph L., PhD

JOSEPH! It's always great news when we hear from a fan who's coming back into the Marvel fold as a result of one of our books, so let me be the first to welcome you back to the Marvel Family! Really glad to hear that you're enjoying where we're taking this volume of Venom, particularly as you're an old-school Eddie Brock fan. Keep reading! I think you'll like what we've got up our sleeves...

Dear SymbiWrote,

Costa & Sandoval are killing the new Venom series.

I've been a comic reader/fan since I was a kid (10 years old) and have never written in before, but after those first two issues I gotta say, "give me more." The first issue blew me away with moments that felt like a straight throwback to the original battle of wills between Peter and the symbiote. You had me hooked there and now with issue two ending with a standoff, I can't wait to see where this series goes. Two quick questions before I go.

1. Any chance Mac is actually able to keep things under wraps? I would love to see the slow build to an empire, as eluded to in issue two.

2. Since this Venom seems like he's staying on Earth, how long till a run-in with the likes of, say, Kingpin, Punisher or Daredevil?

Y'all killing it!!!

Steve D.
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Hey, Steve! Thanks for your letter. LET'S GET TO YOUR QUESTIONS! 1. I guess this issue kind of answers that question for you... Someone's bound to get wise to both Lee and Gargan's plans at this point... 2. KEEP READING! We've got a bunch of exciting Marvel Universe action planned. No immediate plans for Daredevil or characters in his orbit, but some of what we've got in store just might surprise you.

To: VENOM Writers and Artists

I just finished reading VENOM #1 and was surprised at the turn of events that took place. This was a far leap from the end of VENOM: SPACEKNIGHT. I'm excited to see where this is all headed.

The storyline matches the art perfectly. It has kind of a dark and ominous theme. Kind of reminds me of an old miniseries called VENOM: THE HUNGER, where it shows Venom eating another man's brains. I love the new look of Venom! I really like how the white streaks down his arm and hands. I have two questions:

1. Will Eddie Brock be running into Venom anytime in the future or is he too busy chasing Carnage all over the world?

2. I am a couple of issues behind on GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY. Did something happen to Flash and the symbiote or will that all play out in future issues?

Joshua R.
Warren, PA

Hey, Joshua! Thanks for your questions. As you know, we here at Marvel HQ are always working on our stories with our writers, working hard to bring you the best comics mags in the biz. VENOM is no exception, and Mike's been working day and night to make sure that loyal fans like you aren't disappointed. Your two questions both tie into Mike's upcoming plans, so you'll have to keep reading for now, but I CAN say that yes, we've got big plans for both Eddie Brock, and to explain what happened to Flash and the symbiote! Really excited for you and all the fans out there to see 'em!

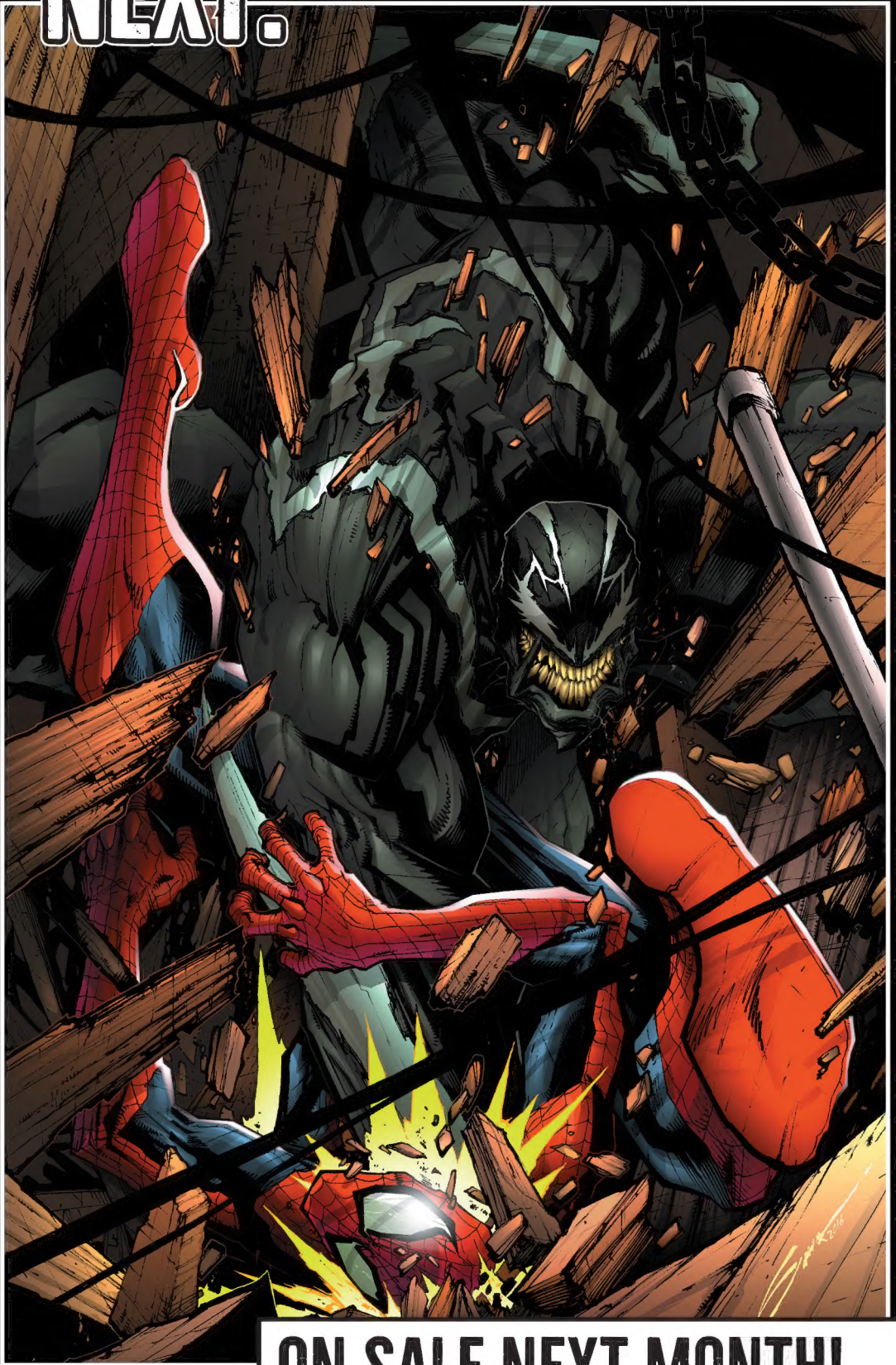
SPEAKING of things you VENOM fans get to see...last month I promised you a peek at one of the biggest projects I've ever worked on here at Marvel - VENOM #150! Now, by the time this comic gets in your hands, we will have released a bit more information about May's upcoming, OVERSIZED Venom anniversary issue, but, in the meantime, I wanted to reward you, the Venom Faithful, with a special, small look at it. It's nothing huge, so don't get your hopes up, but it's a look at the very first page of what's going to be one of the biggest books of the year.

SO! Turn the page. Your EXCLUSIVE sneak peek at VENOM #150 is waiting...

Over and out!

Devin

NEXT:

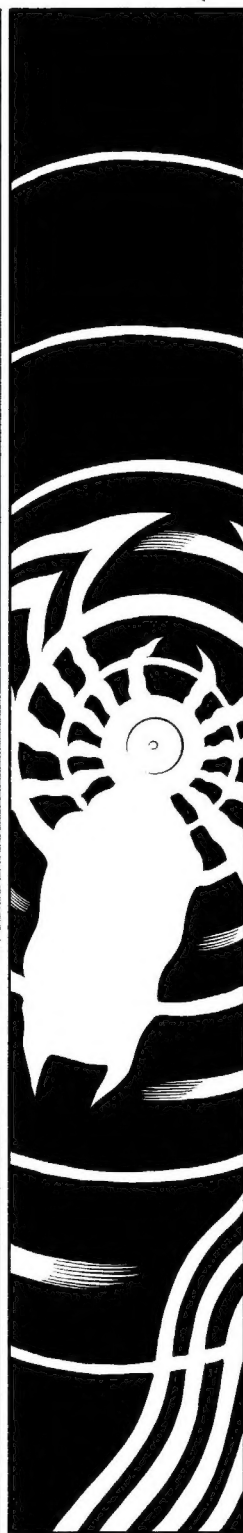
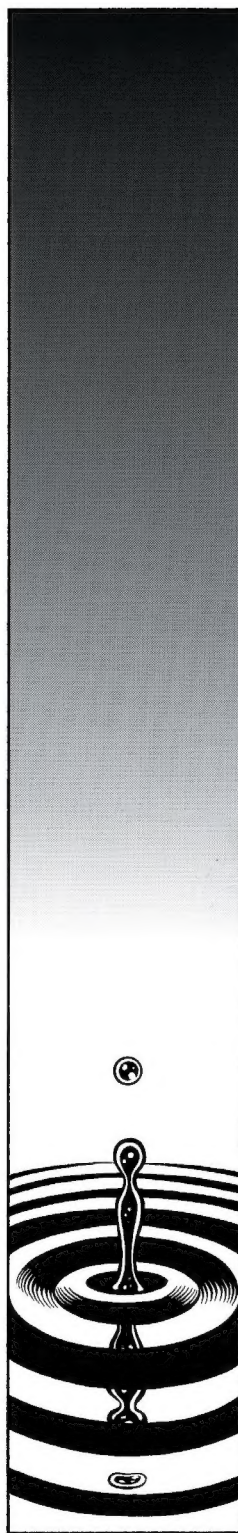
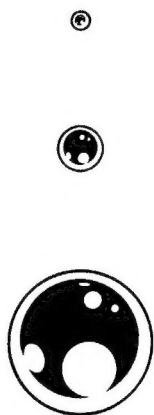
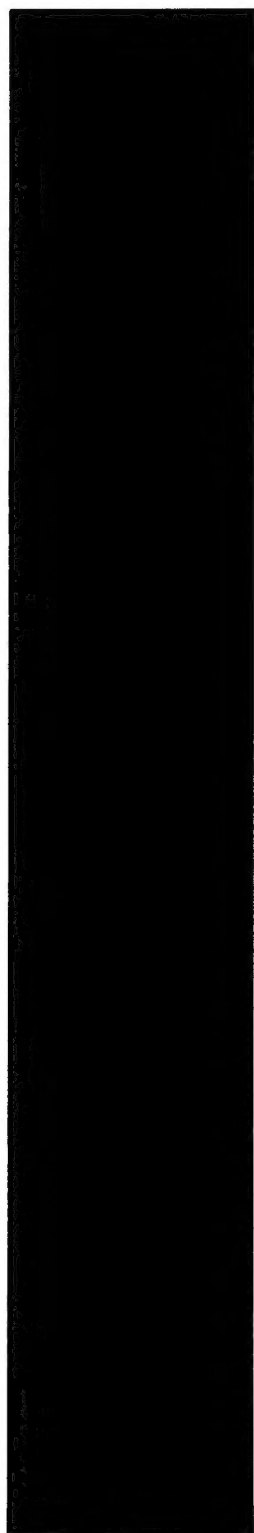


ON SALE NEXT MONTH!

PRESENTING YOUR FIRST LOOK AT

VENOM

#150!



ON SALE MAY 2017!